General Managers and Additional Divisional Railway Managers, respectively. Public has access to these Officers for ventilating their grievances in person.

At all the major stations in the Metropolitan cities, Public Grievances Booths have been set up to attend to public grievances and to provide on the spot redressal. The Station Superintendents also oversee and ensure proper functioning of these booths. Suggestions for improving the Passenger Amenities are also solicited and efforts made to provide better facilities to the passengers. Passenger Associations are given due representation in the DRUCCs/ZRUCCs.

The performance of Public Grievances Redressal Machinery on the Railways is periodically reviewed by the Railway Board by way of calling monthly reports from the Railways. With a view to bringing about further improvement, a cell has been set up under the Minister of Railways, headed by an Officer on Special Duty with the purpose of monitoring punctuality, passenger amenities, including cleanliness and catering services of the Railways.

Foreign Investment in Mining Sector

983 DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of mines in the country at present, location-wise;

(b) whether the Government have envisaged any steps to avoid foreign investment in the Mining Sector, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) State-wise number of reporting major mineral mines in the country (excluding fuel minerals) during 1995-96 is given in the *Statement* enclosed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

STATEMENT

State	No. of Mines
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	334
Arunachal Pradesh	1
Assam	3
Bihar	186
Goa	71
Gujarat	493
Haryana	26
Himachal Pradesh	34
Jammu & Kashmir	2
Karnataka	229
Kerala	48
Madhya Pradesh	381
Maharashtra	101
Manipur	1
Meghalaya	2
Orissa	235
Rajasthan	582
Sikkim	1
Tamil Nadu	130
Uttar Pradesh	44
West Bengal	18
Total	2922

Operation of Private Airlines

384 DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been made by the Private Airlines to allow them to operate on International routes at least to those destinations which are not being linked by Air India and India Airlines;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon;

(c) whether there is any proposal to operate Indian Airlines or Air India flight to destinations hitherto not connected so far;

(d) the international routes under bilateral rights found uneconomical by Indian Airlines and Air India, and

(e) the reasons for not allowing the private airlines at least on those uneconomical international routes?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Some private airlines have sought permission to operate international services to the countries which are already linked by national carriers.

(b) Under the existing policy, private airlines are not designated for scheduled international operations.

(c) Air India is planning to introduce a service between India and Chicago shortly.

(d) and (e). No international route can be classified as uneconomical on a long-term basis as the financial viability of air services operations depends on growth in trade, commerce, tourism etc. over a period of time. So far, no private airlines has come forward to operate on sectors which do not promise immediate financial returns.